

Welcoming speech by
Prof. Raimundas Šiaučiūnas, Rector, Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania

European and International Cooperation between Universities of Technology

Dear Rectors and Presidents of the Universities, dear guests

First of all I would like to welcome all of you attending 27-th conference of Rectors and Presidents of European Universities of Technology “European and international cooperation between universities of technology”. We are delighted to see here so many outstanding Rectors from global famous universities, members of European Commission, European universities Association and other organizations, who were so kind to present their papers at the conference.

This Hall, in which the Conference is being held, is of great importance for entire Lithuania. University of Lithuania – the first University in our country, where the studies were offered in Lithuanian – was founded here in 1922. Through the decades not only universities of Kaunas, but many other universities of Lithuania developed from this University.

The Conference is being held during the crucial moment for the Lithuanian system of higher education. A new Law on Research and Studies is now being considered by our Parliament and presumably will be passed in this autumn. The Law will forecast development of Lithuanian higher education at least for the coming decade. Besides many positive issues planned by the Law project there are some provisions that are of great concern for the academic community. First of all the last ones relate to the aspiration to limit autonomy of the Universities. We believe that your outstanding experience and ideas expressed here will encourage the Rectors of Lithuania and will help them to argue their position in the debates with the politicians.

Such Conference is being held for the first time at our University, and I believe that it will become the standing one, and the Rectors from foreign universities as well as from Lithuanian higher education institutions will enjoy the debates you will have here during the conference.

We do hope that the new contacts established here will increase students and teachers exchange between partner universities. We believe that our Guests will bring home only warm reminiscences about our city and the University.